

Hampi

Quick Facts about Hampi:

1. Timing: From dawn to dusk on all days of the week
2. Fee or Charge: Depends on the activity to be undertaken
3. Photography: Allowed
4. Video Camera: Allowed
5. Best time to visit: From November to February

Overview:

Hampi is a UNESCO World Heritage Site on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra river in the Vijayanagara district of Karnataka. It is a sheer delight for travellers, who have an eye for history and religion. The ancient ruins of the historic village of Hampi, which spreads over 4,100 hectares, are remnants of the glorious past and still strike wonder in people who visit the place.

The History of Hampi:

Hampi was a fortified city and the capital of the Vijayanagara empire in the 14th century. Hampi in 1500 CE had the glory of being the world's second largest city after Beijing. It was a flourishing city, drawing traders from Persia and Portugal. It has been recorded in the chronicles by the Persian, European travellers, particularly the Portuguese that Hampi on the banks of the Tungabhadra river in those days spelt prosperity with many temples, farms and trade markets. The monuments of the Vijayanagara city were constructed between 1336–1570 AD from the times of Harihara-I to Sadasiva Raya. Krishnadevaraya also contributed in the way of royal buildings from 1509 to 30 AD. The structures boast of Dravidian architecture. However, in 1565, the muslim sultanates conquered Hampi and brought its ruin. Though the place is pillaged and is in ruins, the beautiful natural setting of Hampi, which comprises the River Tungabhadra and the boulders are present to this day.

Key Attractions:

1. Vittala Temple: Vittala Temple is one of the most splendid structures of Hampi. This extravagant architectural wonder was built in the 16th century. The temple is famous for its intricately carved pillars and a huge stone chariot that stands inside the temple complex. [\[Read here more about Vittala Temple\]](#)
2. Virupaksha Temple: Virupaksha temple is considered to be the oldest temple in Hampi. The main attractions of the temple include a sprawling temple complex having beautifully carved stone pillars, towering gateways, a huge temple kitchen, large halls and attractive lamp posts. It is a famous pilgrimage site as well as a popular tourist spot.
3. Royal Enclosure: The Royal Enclosure is a fortified area that

spreads across hundreds of square metres of land. This area was the seat of power of the Vijayanagara Empire. It has many interesting structures that attract visitors even in their ruined conditions. Imposing structures like the Dassera Platform and the King's Audience Hall are part of the Royal Enclosure.

4. Kadalekalu Ganesha: Kadalekalu Ganesha is a giant statue of Lord Ganesha. The speciality of the towering statue is that it was carved out of a single stone. The statue is situated inside a beautiful shrine that overlooks the lovely surroundings of the Hemakuta Hill in Hampi.

5. Sasivekalu Ganesha: Sasivekalu Ganesha is a 8 feet high statue of Lord Ganesha that stands inside an open pavilion. The statue has a snake tied around its tummy. The statue dates back to the 16th century AD. It is one of the most frequented sites of Hampi.

6. Krishna Temple: The Krishna Temple is one of the most popular temples in Hampi. The temple is dedicated to the worship of Lord Krishna as an infant. The temple has spectacular carvings on its walls and entrances. Several small shrines and pillared halls dot the campus of the temple.

7. Hazara Rama Temple: The Hazara Rama Temple is a significant shrine in Hampi. It was once the private temple of the kings and the royal family of the Vijayanagara Empire. The reigning deity of the temple is Lord Rama. The temple is known for its bas reliefs and panels that depict the story of Ramayana.

8. Pattabhirama Temple: The Pattabhirama Temple is a large temple that stands within a sprawling campus. The temple is dedicated to the worship of Lord Rama. The beautiful temple is known for its intricate architecture and is very popular among the tourists.

9. Lotus Mahal: The Lotus Mahal or Kamal Mahal is a grand structure that stands within the Zenana enclosure or the secluded area that was reserved for the royal women of the Vijayanagara Empire. The speciality of the structure is that it showcases a blend of the splendid Vijayanagara architecture and the impressive Islamic style of architecture. [Read here more about Lotus Mahal]

10. Elephant Stables: The Elephant Stables in Hampi is one of the major tourist attractions of the ruined village. The stables are also one of the least destroyed structures of Hampi. The stables comprise of a long building with a row of domed chambers. The chambers were the resting place of the royal elephants of the Vijayanagara Empire.

11. Hampi Bazaar: Hampi Bazaar was a thriving market during the glorious days of the Vijayanagara Empire. The Hampi Bazaar is located in front of the Virupaksha Temple. It was once a flourishing market

where merchants from various foreign lands used to sell attractive and unusual items. Today the bazaar sells local artefacts and is often visited by tourists. [read more about Hampi Bazaar here]

12. Achyutaraya temple: The Achyutaraya temple is a fine structure that represents the beauty of the Vijayanagara style of architecture. The temple is dedicated to Lord Tiruvengalanatha, a form of Vishnu. The structure of the temple complex is a unique one as it has two enclosures instead of one enclosure, as is the general norm.

13. Chandramauleshwar Temple: The Chandramauleshwar Temple is a major attraction of visitors on the Hampi trail. This 900 year old temple is a fine example of the craftsmanship of the Vijayanagara workers who had the skill and creativity to build such beautiful stone monuments. The temple is considered to be a Monument of National Importance.

14. Archaeological Museum: The Archaeological Museum at Kamalapura in Hampi is a treasure trove of historical artefacts and ancient relics. The museum is a significant one as it has rare and unique collections of sculptures and artefacts that belong to the Vijayanagara Empire as well as the British rulers of Hampi.

15. Gagan Mahal (Old Palace): The Gagan Mahal or the Old Palace in Hampi is a historical structure. The palace was of great importance during the rule of the Vijayanagara Empire. The ancient palace dates back to the 16th century. It is one of the main attractions of Hampi. It is famous for the intricate carvings on the walls and the decorated balconies.

16. Rock Climbing: Hampi offers ample scope for rock climbing enthusiasts. The rocky terrain of Hampi is mostly scattered with boulders and granite crags of various sizes ranging from 4 m to 60 m in height. The boulders and crags offer easy as well as challenging options for rock climbers to conquer. The rocks and boulders of Hampi are a great place for the rock climbing pros, amateurs and enthusiasts to test their skills. These days there are several organisations which arrange rock climbing camps in Hampi and offer tourists and visitors an opportunity to experience the thrill of the adventure sport while enjoying a holiday in this ancient town.

17. Trekking: The ancient town of Hampi is a great place for trekking enthusiasts to explore the natural and man-made beauty of the land. The ruined town has a rocky terrain and several large and small rocky hills that are ideal for trekking. One of the amazing trek routes that do not involve a climb is the Kampa Bhupa's Path in Hampi. There are many other trekking routes in Hampi. Most of them involve trekking to the hill tops. Among the popular trekking destinations of Hampi are the Hemakuta Hill trek, the Matanga Hill trek, the Anjaneya

Hill trek and the Malyavanta Hill trek. Each trek route offers ample view of the natural beauty of Hampi.

18. Coracle Ride: A unique thing to experience in this ancient town is to enjoy a coracle ride on the waters of the River Tungabhadra. A coracle is a circular shaped country boat that can carry about 6 to 8 people on a single trip across the river. These coracle boats have been in use in Hampi since the time of the Vijayanagara Empire. A coracle is a great means to enjoy a ride across the swirling waters of the river. The rides are not dangerous but they can be a bit scary for the weak hearted people.

19. Exploring on Bicycle: The attraction of Hampi lies in its architectural ruins that can be found scattered all over the place. An easy and interesting way to explore the extensive ruins of Hampi is by riding a bicycle or a moped.

Bicycles, mopeds and scooters are available for hire at Hampi. Visitors and tourists interested in riding them can hire them easily. Mopeds and scooters help in covering long stretches in a short duration of time.

However, a bicycle has a unique charm of its own and can be a great way to explore the rocky terrain and the widespread ruins, especially the vast expanses of the Royal Enclosure.

20. Bullock and Horse Cart Rides: Hampi is a place where you can get a glimpse of rural India from close quarters. There are about 30 settlements in and around Hampi where the local people lead a simple rural life.

You can cross the river Tungabhadra to arrive at one of the settlements and take a bullock cart ride to see the beauty of rural India in this part of the country.

Bullock carts and horse carts are a common sight in and around Hampi. The horse carts in Hampi are decorated in vibrant colours. A ride in a horse cart or a bullock cart is a thrilling experience in itself which is quite different from the rides in other modern modes of transport.

How to reach Hampi:

Hampi is a renowned tourist destination that is located in the Ballari (Bellary) district of Karnataka. It is situated at a distance of about 340 km from Bengaluru. There are various routes through which visitors can reach Hampi as the ancient city is accessible by different modes of transport – air, rail as well as road.

1. By Air

Hampi has no airport of its own. Ballari (Bellary) is the nearest town that has an airport. Ballari is situated at a distance of around 64 km from Hampi. Visitors can reach Ballari by taking a flight. They can then travel to Hampi by means of local transport.

2. By Rail

The village of Hampi has no railway station to call its own. The nearest railway station can be found in the town of Hosapete (Hospet). It has the Hospet Junction Railway Station. Hosapete is situated at a distance of around 10 km from Hampi.

A simple way to reach Hampi from Hosapete is to take a bus. There are a few other means of local transport that can be availed by visitors to reach Hampi from Hosapete.

3.By Road

Hampi has a good road network. Due to this network it is connected to many towns and cities of Karnataka. There are a number of KSRTC buses that travel between Hampi and several towns and cities in Karnataka. Visitors can opt to hire private cars, cabs or other vehicles from big cities like Bengaluru (Bangalore) or Mysuru (Mysore) to travel to Hampi.

Mysore Palace

Quick Facts about Mysore Palace:

1. Timing: 10: 00 AM to 5: 30 PM

Night view timings: 7: 00 PM to 7: 40 PM (Light Show)

2. Fee or Charge: Indians: INR 40 for Adults, INR 20 for Children and INR 10 for Students

For the Light Show: INR 40 for Adults and INR 25 for Children

Foreigner tourists: INR 200 entry + INR 200 for light show

3. Photography: Not Allowed Inside the palace but you can click any number of pictures outside the palace.

4. Video Camera: Not Allowed Inside the palace but you can click any number of pictures outside the palace.

5. Best time to visit: From October to February

Overview:

The palace had its foundation laid way back in the 14th century by the Wodeyars or Wadiyars, the royal family of Mysore. It is believed that the Mysore Palace king, Yaduraya Wodeyar, built a palace in Puragiri aka the Old Fort during his reign. This palace, which is believed to be the predecessor of the current palace, has been demolished and reconstructed multiple times over six centuries.

Initially, the palace was a wooden fortress which was struck by lightning in 1638 and reconstructed under the rein of Kantirava Narasa Raja Wodeyar. In 1793 AD, when Tipu Sultan took over the Wodeyar Dynasty, he demolished the palace and rebuilt it. In 1799, soon after the death of Tipu Sultan, the palace came under Krishnaraja Wodeyar III, who redesigned the palace as per the Hindu architectural style. Sadly, in 1897, the palace was destroyed by fire during the wedding ceremony of Princess Jayalakshmmanni. Again, Maharani Kempananjamanni Devi and her son Maharaja Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV decided to rebuild the palace. The task of revamping the palace was commissioned to a British architect named Henry Irwin, who designed and completed this palace in 1912, at a whopping cost of over 41 lakh Indian rupees. Further expansions were done and a Public Durbar Hall wing was added

to the palace under the reign of Jayachamarajendra Wadiyar during the 1930s.

History of Mysore Palace:

Mysore Palace was the official residence of the royal family of Mysore. In 1897, a fire destroyed the old palace, and in 1917, they built a new palace that was inaugurated in a grand ceremony. They illuminated the palace with numerous lights during the inauguration. The British architect Henry Irwin designed the palace to reflect the grandeur and opulence of the royal family, showcasing their power and wealth.

Additionally, the palace served as a centre for cultural and social events, where the royal family hosted numerous celebrations and ceremonies. It attracts millions of tourists from around the world, especially during Dashehra.

Mysore Palace Architecture:

The exquisite architecture of Mysore Palace combines elements from Hindu, Muslim, and Gothic styles. The walls and ceilings of the palace feature intricate designs, while the columns are adorned with paintings, carvings, and murals that reflect the region's cultural heritage. The public rooms feature ornate chandeliers, marble floors, and velvet drapes. Moreover, the private chambers feature exquisite furnishings, including intricately carved wooden furniture and silk tapestries. The most striking feature of the palace is the use of colorful stained glass windows. Therefore, when the sun is shining bright, these windows create an ethereal glow creating a mesmerizing ambiance inside.

Spread across an area of 700,000 square feet, the palace has four entrances.

- East Entrance: This was known as the Jaya Maarthaanda Gate and is the main gate to the palace that leads to Darbar Hall. It has an archway with intricate carvings and paintings narrating the story of the Mysore Kingdom.

- West Entrance: This was known as the Varaha Gate named after the avatar of Lord Vishnu. It is one of the oldest entrances with carvings of Hindu deities and a large statue of the Varaha avatar of Lord Vishnu.

- North Entrance: This was known as the Jayarama Gate and it leads to the wedding hall (Kalyana Mantapa). This is a beautiful hall with stained glass windows and intricate carvings.

- South Entrance: This was known as the Balarama Gate and was used by the royal family to access the palace gardens. Its archway has carvings of various animals depicting the wildlife of the region.

Key Attractions:

1. The Durbar Hall

This is the reception hall where the maharaja used to address the public. It is similar to the Ambavilasa hall in design but it is far larger and sitting atop a balcony from where the main gate can be seen.

The maharaja used this balcony to talk to his people and festivals and celebrations were also performed in the area in front of the balcony. This hall is fully decorated in pink, yellow and turquoise with intricately painted columns all symmetrically spaced across the hall. The walls of the Durbar Hall are decorated with priced paintings from the time.

2. Ambavilasa

Similar in design and style to The Durbar Hall is the Ambavilasa room. However, this room is even more spectacular than the Durbar Hall because of the amount of gold used on the gilded columns and the stained glass ceiling which is a masterpiece. The entire room is overwhelming and since it is one of the highlights of the visit, it is permanently crowded. Make sure to check out the steel grills on the ceiling and the enormous chandeliers. Even the pietra dura flooring is amazing, if half hidden by the carpets. This room is as majestic and regal as any royal palace could ever look.

As you walk into the room, you will realise you can only see it from one of the sides but, as you leave and descend down the stairs following the visit's path, make sure to turn your head around when you are in the staircase. The door that opens to the room, which can be seen from the back in the staircase, is beautiful in its own right. Make sure to note its ivory inlays.

3. Kalyana Mantapa

Kalyana Mantapa, also known as the marriage hall, is one of the first halls you will see in your visit and it is sure to leave you speechless. The hall is octagonal in shape and the amount of detail and work that went into the room, with its vaulted domed ceiling and gilded columns, is remarkable. Make sure to look up to the stained glass ceiling with peacock motifs which are also reflected on the floor. The peacock is a very common animal in India, one which you will see a lot especially in Rajasthan (I saw plenty of them when staying at Amanbagh and going on an excursion to visit the haunted ruins of Bhangarh Fort) and it is also the national bird of India. Honoring the animal that presides over the room, the main colors used here are hues of green and golden, like the peacock's feathers. The walls are decorated with various paintings some of which depict the Dasara festival Mysore is so famous for.

4. Gombe Thotti or Dolls' Pavilion:

As soon as you enter the palace, the first sight to greet visitors is a beautiful set of eclectic artefacts displayed in the Gombe Thotti or Dolls' Pavilion. It was once a showcase for the dolls and palanquins featured in the Dussehra celebrations but is now a gallery of European and Indian sculpture and ceremonial objects. It is here that one can see the ceremonial Golden Howdah, an elaborately decorated throne made of 84 kg of gold and precious stones. Another fascinating exhibit, and a hit with children, is an elaborate clock with antoinettes, mechanical elements and a procession of dolls that is activated on the

hour.

5. The Howdah:

The exact date of its making is not known. The 750-kg-howdah, used in the Jamboo Savari (elephant procession) on the Vijayadashami day, has two wide seats in rows, bigger than the interiors of a family car. The Rajas of Mysore used this howdah in the famous Dasara procession, which traversed through the thoroughfares of the princely city during the festival every year. But since the abolition of royalty the statue of Chamundeshwari is being carried in the howdah. The Howdah is made of Pure gold. The core structure is wood and it was covered in filigreed gold sheets weighing 85 kilograms by "Swarnakala Nipuna" Singannacharya. It has three deftly carved pillars on each of the four sides. It is covered with a canopy resembling a crown. There are five sacred "Kalashas" on top of it. The seat itself is made of silver, alluring designs embellishing it, and it will be shown in only dasara times.

6. Elephant Gate or Ane Bagilu:

Elephant Gate of the Mysore Palace is commonly described as Indo-Saracenic mode of architecture. The architecture of Mysore Place is a perfect blend together with Hindu Culture, Muslim Culture, Rajput Culture, and Gothic styles of architecture.

Elephant Gate in Mysore Palace has five entry points. The brass gate of ornate is the main doorway to the Mysore Palace. Elephant gate faces towards east which known as Ane Bagilu. All ceremonial processions began outside this Elephant gate amidst a kaleidoscope of colour and the swirling sounds of marching bands, regiments of soldiers, decorated elephants and camels, garlands of flowers, heraldic insignia royal flags and sacred umbrellas of the king riding in his Golden Howdah atop elephant would travel through this corridor and head on into town.

The coat of the royal family is skilfully interwoven into the delicate foliage on both the gates. The two lions with elephant heads flank a heraldic crest containing a double-headed eagle. The lion is symbolizing power and royalty, and the elephant strength.

The motto in Sanskrit Language reads "Satyamevoddharamyam", means "I uphold only the truth" Ghadaberunda, the double headed eagle sits regally on top of both gates. This is the emblem of royal family of Mysore in Karnataka. The mounted heads of two elephants shot in local forests by the king in 1955.

7. The wrestling courtyard:

The wrestling courtyard inside the royal Mysore Palace is an eye-witness to the wrestling competitions, which is one of the most popular sports in India at that time and in modern times. This is the place where the wrestler's patron – the Wodeyar Maharajas enjoyed the sport, especially during the Dussehra Festival. This is not modern wrestling at all, but you can say that the Indian form of wrestling named Vajra-Mushti is a fist-load, knuckleduster-like" weapon.

Mysore Palace Light and Sound Show:

The light and sound show held in the evenings is one of the prime attractions at Mysore Palace India. The entire show portrays the 600-year-old cultural heritage, history, and traditions of the Wodeyar Dynasty in a visually appealing manner. It is advised to check the show and Mysore palace timings and tickets for availability.

Kannada:

- Monday to Wednesday – Time 7.00 PM to 8.00 PM & Saturday – Time 8.15 PM to 9.15 PM
- Entrance Ticket in Rs. Adults 100 & Children Rs 40 / Ticket.

English:

- Thursday to Saturday – Time 7.00 PM to 8.00 PM
- Entrance Ticket in Rs. Adults 120 & Children Rs 50 / Ticket.
- Duration: 45 minutes
- No refund of tickets if the show is stopped in between due to rain or any other reasons.

Mysore Palace Illumination and Dasara Celebration:

Mysore Palace is lit up in the evening on Sundays and public holidays, and also during the ten days of Dasara celebrations. Dussehra or Mysore Dasara is the most awaited festival in Mysore, which is celebrated with the royal fiesta during Navratri. The 400-year-old tradition of the Dussehra celebration is being followed with all the rituals in the city of Mysore. During weekdays, you can enjoy the illumination after the light and sound show for five minutes. The illumination is done using 97000 electric bulbs, making the palace a sight to behold. Many Mysore palace photos showcase the illumination making it a highlight of the palace.

Timings:

- Sundays, public holidays, and during Dasara – 7:00 pm to 7:45 pm
- Weekdays – 7:40 pm to 7:45 pm
- Tickets: Not required

How to reach Mysore Palace:

By Train:

The Mysore Junction (MYS) or the Mysuru Junction is the primary railway station close to Mysore Palace. Trains from major cities like Delhi, Mangalore, and Chennai regularly ply to this junction. It is at a distance of around 2.5 km from Mysore Palace. You can take a bus or opt for a car rental service to reach the palace and explore the nearby areas in a hassle-free manner. If there is no direct train from your city to MYS, then you can take a train to Bangalore and then opt for a connecting train to Mysore.

By Road:

Most people from the southern cities of India prefer traveling by road to Mysore since it has excellent connectivity via most cities in South India via highways and expressways. Here is a quick look at the road distance between Mysore and other major cities:

Bangalore to Mysore: 143 km (driving time of around 3 hours)

Hyderabad to Mysore: 725 km (driving time of around 12 hours)
Chennai to Mysore: 482 km (driving time of around 9 hours)
Mangalore to Mysore: 255 km (driving time of around 6 hours)

By Flight:

The Mysore Airport (MYQ) is the nearest airport to Mysore Palace. It is at a distance of around 11 km from the monument. There are various options to travel from the airport to Mysore Palace. The most convenient way is to hire a cab from Mysore airport and cover the distance within 20 minutes. The airport is well-connected to major Indian cities. However, if there is no flight from your city to Mysore, you can take a flight to Bangalore and then take a train or hire a cab to get to Mysore.

Taj Mahal

Quick Facts about Taj Mahal:

1. Timing:

- Opens: 30 minutes before sunrise
- Closes: 30 minutes before sunset
- Closed on: Fridays
- Night view timings: 8.30 pm to 12.30 pm (Visiting in 8 batches with maximum 50 people each batch)

2. Fee or Charge:

- Indians: INR 50 for entry + INR 200 for main mausoleum
- Citizens of SAARC and BIMSTEC countries: INR 540 entry + INR 200 for main mausoleum
- Foreigner tourists: INR 1100 entry + INR 200 for main mausoleum
- Children under 15 years of age: Free entry

3. Photography: Not Allowed Inside the main mausoleum.

4. Video Camera: Not Allowed Inside the main mausoleum.

5. Best time to visit: November and February

Overview:

Taj Mahal, mausoleum complex in Agra, western Uttar Pradesh state, northern India. The Taj Mahal was built by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahān (reigned 1628–58) to immortalize his wife Mumtaz Mahal ("Chosen One of the Palace"), who died in childbirth in 1631, having been the emperor's inseparable companion since their marriage in 1612. India's most famous and widely recognized building, it is situated in the eastern part of the city on the southern (right) bank of the Yamuna (Jumna) River. Agra Fort (Red Fort), also on the right bank of the Yamuna, is about 1 mile (1.6 km) west of the Taj Mahal. In its harmonious proportions and its fluid incorporation of decorative elements, the Taj Mahal is distinguished as the finest example of Mughal architecture, a blend of Indian, Persian, and Islamic styles. Other attractions include twin mosque buildings (placed symmetrically on either side of the mausoleum), lovely gardens, and a museum. One of the most beautiful structural compositions in the world, the Taj Mahal is also one of the world's most iconic monuments, visited by millions of tourists each year. The complex was designated a UNESCO World

Heritage site in 1983.

History of construction:

The plans for the complex have been attributed to various architects of the period, though the chief architect was probably Ustad Aḥmad Lahawrī, an Indian of Persian descent. The five principal elements of the complex—main gateway, garden, mosque, jawāb (literally “answer”; a building mirroring the mosque), and mausoleum (including its four minarets)—were conceived and designed as a unified entity according to the tenets of Mughal building practice, which allowed no subsequent addition or alteration. Building commenced about 1632. More than 20,000 workers were employed from India, Persia, the Ottoman Empire, and Europe to complete the mausoleum itself by about 1638–39; the adjunct buildings were finished by 1643, and decoration work continued until at least 1647. In total, construction of the 42-acre (17-hectare) complex spanned 22 years. A tradition relates that Shah Jahān originally intended to build another mausoleum across the river to house his own remains. That structure was to have been constructed of black marble, and it was to have been connected by a bridge to the Taj Mahal. He was deposed in 1658 by his son Aurangzeb, however, and was imprisoned for the rest of his life in Agra Fort.

Architecture and Design:

Taj Mahal, synonymous with India's identity, is the crowning jewel of Mughal architecture in India. The Mughal tradition of erecting majestic mausoleums in memory of Royal members found its culmination in the Taj's majestic form. The Humayun's tomb built in 1562 was a major influence over Taj's design. An architectural marvel, the structure incorporates elements of Persian influences like the design of the Dome and incorporation of arched entrances or 'Iwans' along with inspiration from contemporary Hindu design elements like chhatris and copious incorporation of the lotus motif. Described by Tagore as “the tear-drop on the cheek of time”, the monument embodies funereal austerity turned into the most beautiful reminder of eternal love. Taj Mahal is part of an elaborate complex consisting of a decorative gateway, a beautifully designed garden, a wonderful water system and a mosque. The complex is situated on the southern banks of river Yamuna. The complex stretches in a south to north incline towards the river and is constructed in steps.

Exterior of the Taj Mahal:

The central focus of the complex is the Tomb structure. Made completely out of white marble, its beauty lies in the symmetry of its architecture. The structure is situated on a raised square plinth, also made of white marble, at a height of 50 m from the river level, at one end of the complex. The tomb itself is situated at the center of the plinth, framed by four equidistant minarets. The Taj Mahal is a square structure with sides measuring 55 m. The minarets are spread at a distance of 41.75 m from the tomb wall and have a height of 39.62 m. There is a bulbous central dome in the main building, 18.28 m in

diameter and 73 m in height. The dome is elevated from the top of the building by a 7 m high cylindrical base. It is decorated at its top by lotus motif and ends in a gilded finial topped with the Islamic half-moon. The spherical and grand aspect of the central dome is emphasized by incorporation of smaller domes on both sides in the form of chhatris, also capped in gilded finials. Each minaret is divided into three equal segments by two balconies and has an octagonal base. The delicate curve of the dome is emphasized by the tapering structure and slightly angular placement of the minarets. The entrance to the main tomb is framed by a huge arched vault or Iwan which in turn is again framed by two similar but smaller arches on each side. These arches indicate stacked balconies along two different levels. This is called pishtaq, which is replicated on all the eight edges of the building affording it another dimension of symmetry.

The juxtaposition of solids and voids in combination with concave and convex design elements create a breathtaking effect of contrast. The marble exterior changes color periodically reflecting the light conditions of the day and produces an astonishing pearly diaphanous effect at night.

The exteriors of the Taj are inlaid with intricate decorations. Generously inlaid with precious gemstones like opals, lapis lazuli and jade, the decorations offer stunning flashes of color against a white background. Stucco and paintings cover the exterior walls along with calligraphy of verses from Quran or excerpts from poems in black marble. Murals of herringbone inlays and marble jaalis, mosaics of colored stones in geometric patterns along with abstract tessellations cover the exterior floors and surfaces.

Interior of the Taj Mahal:

The interior of Taj mahal is dominated by a cavernous octagonal central chamber with eight smaller chambers radiating from it. The smaller chambers are leveled across two floors making a total of 16 such niches. The central chamber is the main funerary chamber housing the cenotaphs of Mumtaz Mahal and Shah Jahan. The two ornate marble cenotaphs are enclosed within a marble screen and face the south. The actual sarcophagi are housed below the tomb is a relatively simple crypt.

Although Islam prohibits elaborate decoration of tombs, Shah Jahan flamboyantly overlooked the dictate and commissioned opulent detailing of the interior surfaces. Inlays of Pietra dura and lapidary adorn the floors and works of the walls and floors. Copious amounts of gemstones were used for the design along with colored stones. Highly polished surfaces reflect the light filtered through marble lattice work in the windows and arches. Calligraphic inscriptions of the 99 names of God is carved on the tombs itself and on Shah Jahan's tomb an addition passage has been inscribed in impeccable calligraphy reading "He travelled from this world to the banquet-hall of Eternity on the night of the twenty-sixth of the month of Rajab, in the year 1076 Hijri."

The Garden (Mughal Garden) at the Taj Mahal:

The garden is an intricate part of Mughal mausoleums and is commonly known as Charbagh. Raised red sandstone pathways divide the Mughal garden into four segments which are in turn fractioned into 16 symmetrical sections. A raised square marble pool is situated midway between the Taj Mahal and the Entrance. The Hawd al-Kawthar or Tank of Abundance positioned on the north-south axis offer beautiful reflection of the Taj in all its glory. Various fruit bearing trees and Cyprus trees symbolizing life and death respectively are arranged in symmetrical equidistant patterns along the raised central pathway. The garden is designed in such a way that it offers unhindered view of the Taj from any random point.

Other Buildings in the Taj Complex:

Every element of the Taj complex was designed to uphold the majesty and beauty of the Taj Mahal. The main entrance gateway or Darwaza-e-Rauza is constructed with red sandstone and is designed in such a way that standing outside the archway one cannot see the Taj, but upon entering it manifests offering a breathtaking effect.

The mosque on the western side of the Taj Mahal and the Nakkar Khana or guest house on the eastern side are made with red sandstone. They are mirror images of each other in design, which in Mughal architectural terms is called Jawab, and enhance the symmetry of the Taj along with emphasizing the translucent beauty of the white marble structure.

Taj Mahal – Myths & Legends:

Several myths surround the Taj Mahal. The most wide spread of them is that after completion of construction, Shah Jahan ordered the thumbs of the architects and workers to be cut off so that they cannot reproduce the work they did for him. This however does not have any historical evidence.

There is also the myth of Shah Jahan commissioning a Black Taj Mahal, but was unable to finish it since his rule was overthrown by his son Aurangzeb. Some historians believe that the ruins excavated in the Mehtab Bagh, situated on the opposite bank of river Yamuna, are the incomplete remains of the structure owing to its similarity with Taj Mahal's symmetrical architecture.

An Indian writer, P. N. Oak claimed that the Taj Mahal was built on the site of a Shiv Temple called Tejo Mahalaya that was originally built by a Hindu king Parmar Dev. However, this claim was dismissed by the Supreme Court of India despite petitions for excavations.

Last eight years of Shah Jahan was spent in confinement in the Shah Burj of the Agra Fort. It is said that he spent his days gazing towards the Taj Mahal from a small jharokha in his cell and remembering his beloved Mumtaz Mahal.

How to Reach Taj Mahal:

1. By Air

The fastest way of reaching Taj Mahal, Agra is by air. The city of Taj, Agra, has its own airport that is around 7 km from the city

center. Indian Airlines operates flights to Agra on a daily basis.

2. By Rail

There is a good network of trains connecting Agra with the rest of the country. Apart from the main railway station of Agra Cantonment, there are other two stations also, that of Raja-ki-Mandi and Agra Fort. The main trains connecting Agra with Delhi are Palace on Wheels, Shatabdi, Rajdhani, and Taj Express.

3. By Road

There are regular bus services from Agra to a number of important cities. The main bus stand of Idgah has a number of buses running for Delhi, Jaipur, Mathura, Fatehpur-Sikri, etc. if you are coming from Delhi to Agra. you can hire Delhi to Agra Taxi on special discounts.

4. Local Transportation

After reaching the city also, you need some sort of local transport to reach Taj Mahal. You can easily get taxi, tempo, auto-rickshaw and cycle rickshaw in the city that will take you to your destination. Prepaid taxis are also available if you want to visit the various places near the city. For the adventurous kind, there are bicycles that can be hired on hourly basis from different parts of the city. Since diesel and petrol vehicle are not permitted in the vicinity of Taj Mahal area, you can find battery-operated buses, horse-driven tongas, rickshaws and other pollution-free vehicles there.

Varanasi

Quick Facts about Varanasi:

1. Timing: From dawn to dusk on all days of the week
2. Fee or Charge: Depends on the activity to be undertaken
3. Photography: Allowed
4. Video Camera: Allowed
5. Best time to visit: between the months of October and February

History and Architecture of Varanasi:

Varanasi boasts a rich history dating back over 3,000 years, making it one of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities. According to Hindu mythology, the city was founded by Lord Shiva, making it one of the most revered pilgrimage sites for Hindus.

Throughout history, Varanasi has been a center of learning, spirituality, and art.

The architecture of Varanasi is a blend of various styles. The city is adorned with numerous temples, each showcasing intricate carvings and unique designs. The Kashi Vishwanath Temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva, is a prime example of the city's architectural brilliance.

The ghats, with their distinctive steps leading to the river, are a striking feature of Varanasi's architecture.

Facts about Varanasi:

- Varanasi is considered the spiritual capital of India and plays a vital role in Hindu mythology and religion.
- Hindus believe that dying in Varanasi and getting cremated on the banks of the Ganges can lead to Moksha, liberation from the cycle of birth and death.
- Varanasi is renowned for its classical music and dance, and it is often referred to as the birthplace of many Indian music legends.
- The city is famous for its exquisite Banarasi silk sarees, which are cherished by women across the country and beyond.
- Varanasi has been an essential center for education, attracting scholars and students from different parts of the world for centuries.

Key attractions In Varanasi:

1. Discover Varanasi's Temples:

Varanasi is home to a large number of temples. You can explore the city's magnificent temples that showcase stunning architecture and religious significance.

You can also visit the Kashi Vishwanath Temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva, and the Sankat Mochan Hanuman Temple, believed to fulfill devotees' wishes. The sacred vibes and intriguing history of these temples are truly captivating.

Location: Various temples in Varanasi

Best Time: Morning or evening

2. Embrace Sunrise at Dashashwamedh Ghat:

Dashashwamedh Ghat is one of the most popular ghats in Varanasi. You should head to Dashashwamedh Ghat in the early hours to witness this awe-inspiring spectacle.

The spiritual energy and the sight of locals performing morning rituals will leave you in awe. Be there around 5:30 AM to catch the magic at its peak.

Location: Dashashwamedh Ghat, Varanasi

Best Time: Early morning, around 5:30 AM

3. Boat Ride on the Ganges:

Boating on the Ganges is one of the very popular activities that the tourist visiting Varanasi should not miss. There are so many boats available for rides on the bank of various ghats in Varanasi.

Hop on a boat for a serene ride on the sacred Ganges. Marvel at the architectural splendor of Varanasi's ghats from the water, and soak in the ambiance as the city slowly wakes up.

Witness the age-old rituals and ceremonies performed along the riverbank, offering a glimpse into the spiritual heart of India.

Location: Various ghats along the Ganges

Best Time: Early morning or evening

4. Explore the Ghats on Foot:

Ghats are the soul of Varanasi. Each ghat has its own story. Take a leisurely stroll along the ghats to immerse yourself in the bustling

atmosphere.

From mesmerizing Sadhus to the aroma of incense and street food vendors, every step unravels the unique stories of Varanasi's rich culture.

Interact with the locals; their warm smiles and tales will make your experience even more delightful.

Location: Ghats of Varanasi

Best Time: Late morning or afternoon

5. Gorge on Street Food Delights:

Varanasi is undoubtedly a foodie's paradise. The city has a diverse range of street food options. So, prepare your taste buds for a thrilling journey through Varanasi's street food scene.

Relish mouthwatering delicacies like chaat, kachori, lassi, and the renowned Banarasi paan. Also, don't forget to try Varanasi's best sweets.

Wander through the narrow alleys and discover hidden gems serving up delightful treats that'll leave you craving for more.

Location: Throughout Varanasi

Best Time: Evening

6. Unwind at Sarnath:

A short trip to Sarnath is a serene escape from the city's intensity. Exploring the ancient stupas and monasteries where Lord Buddha once walked, you will feel a profound sense of peace and spirituality. The well-preserved ruins and the beautiful gardens make it a truly enriching experience.

Location: Sarnath, approximately 13 km from Varanasi

Best Time: Open all day, sunrise to sunset

7. Ramnagar Fort Exploration:

Visiting the impressive Ramnagar Fort is like taking a journey back in time. The grand architecture, the museum's antique collections, and the scenic views of the Ganges make it an exciting exploration.

It is a glimpse into the opulent life of Varanasi's royalty.

Location: Ramnagar, across the Ganges from Varanasi

Best Time: Morning to early afternoon

8. Attend the Ganga Aarti:

Ganga Aarti is a very popular ceremony in Varanasi which is performed every day in the evening. You must have seen a lot of Instagram reels on Varanasi Ganga Aarti nowadays.

So, you should definitely experience spiritual bliss at the Ganga Aarti ceremony held at the Dashashwamedh Ghat every evening.

The rhythmic chanting, resonating bells, and the sight of the Ganges adorned with lit lamps create an enchanting ambiance. The ceremony symbolizes the veneration of the river, making it a deeply moving and unforgettable experience.

Location: Dashashwamedh Ghat, Varanasi

Best Time: Evening, around 6:30 PM

9. Weave through Banaras Hindu University (BHU):

BHU is one of India's most prestigious educational institutions in India. You should take a walk around Banaras Hindu University and feel the enlightenment aura there.

Admire the lush green campus, visit the Bharat Kala Bhavan Museum, and soak in the youthful energy of this academic haven. It's a great place to connect with young minds and learn more about Indian culture.

Location: BHU, Varanasi

Best Time: Morning to early evening

10. Savor the Sunset from Ahilyabai Ghat:

After exploring the above tourist attractions, end your day on a mesmerizing note by witnessing the sunset from Ahilyabai Ghat.

As the sun sets over the Ganges, the sky transforms into a magnificent canvas of colors. The serene atmosphere and the soft glow of lamps during the evening prayers add to the charm of this place.

Location: Ahilyabai Ghat, Varanasi

Best Time: Evening, around sunset

How to get to Varanasi:

1. Air

Varanasi has its own airport which is Lal Bahadur Shastri Airport. Formerly known as Varanasi Airport, the airhead connects the city with all the other major cities of the country. A number of international flights also operates from the airport. From the airport, one can hire a taxi to reach the destination. The airway is the ideal way to reach Varanasi for international tourists.

2. Rail

Like the airport, the city also has its own railway station – Varanasi Junction. It is one of the busiest railway stations in Uttar Pradesh. Daily regular trains connect the city with almost all the regions of the country. In order to reach the destination, one you can either take a bus or can hire a taxi. With the vast Indian Rail Network, the city is easily accessible from every corner of the country, and thus, it is the best way to reach Varanasi.

3. Road

Both private and government buses to Varanasi run from the major the cities of Uttar Pradesh and also from the neighboring. Allahabad, Patna, Ranchi, Lucknow and Gorakhpur are some places from where you can enter Varanasi through bus services. The well-paved roads and national highways also allow ones to drive himself to Varanasi.

Khajuraho

Quick Facts about Khajuraho:

1. Timing: Khajuraho remain open every day from sunrise to sunset
2. Fee or Charge: Entry ticket is INR 40 for Indian nationals and members of SAARC and BIMSTEC countries. For foreign visitors, the

ticket is INR 400. This ticket will also be valid for visiting the ASI Museum(open from 10 AM to 5 PM on all days, except Fridays). No ticket is necessary for visiting the Eastern and Southern Groups of Temples.

3. Photography: you have to pay INR 200 for the camera

4. Video Camera: you have to pay INR 400 for the video camera

5. Best time to visit: October to February is the best time to visit Khajuraho

Overview & History:

At first glance, Khajuraho appears as an idyllic Indian village, surrounded by low-lying hills and lush agricultural fields. A closer inspection gradually raises the curtain and reveals the magic of Khajuraho. Khajuraho is the storehouse of magnificent temples built by the Chandelas in the 9th and 10th centuries. It went by the name of Kharjuravahaka ('kharjura' means date palm and 'vahaka' means one who carries). According to legends, the city used to have two gold date palm trees as its gate and hence the name.

Khajuraho was the religious capital of the mighty Chandelas, who went on an extraordinary spree of constructing temples, seen never before or afterward in the entire Indian subcontinent. The Chandelas built as many as 85 temples in Khajuraho, an unmatched feat that has immortalized the name of the Chandelas in the annals of Indian history. However, Khajuraho went into oblivion from the 11th century and its history was revived by the eminent archaeologist Alexander Cunningham in the 19th century.

The temples in Khajuraho testify to the exceptional engineering skill of the Chandela architects. Incredibly sturdy and strikingly elegant at the same time, the temples of Khajuraho were built by assembling blocks and without using mortar or plaster of any kind. Added to these were the skillful rendition of various types of sculptural ornamentation. All in all, the Khajuraho temples manifest the zenith of India's Nagara style of architecture, something which modern architects still try hard to replicate.

Key attractions:

Khajuraho is renowned for the temples built by the Chandela rulers. The massive temples are living specimens of the excellent skill of Chandela architects and sculptors and prove their mastery. The mere mention of Khajuraho evokes images of erotic sculptures of couples engaged in copulation. In fact, Khajuraho has become synonymous with erotic temple sculptures, which depict various forms of 'mithuna'. Funnily enough, only 10% of Khajuraho's temple carvings are erotic in nature. The enormous volume of carvings on the walls of Khajuraho temples belongs to Hindu deities, Dikpalas, demi-gods like Ganas and Gandharvas, Celestial Women such as Apsaras and Surasundaris, amorous couples, animals, secular scenes like war and hunting, and geometric and floral designs.

1. Lakshmana Temple:

As you enter the manicured lawn of Western Group, the first temple

that will steal your sight is the opulent Lakshmana Temple. It was built by Yasovarmana to celebrate his victory against the Pratiharas and was dedicated to Vaikuntha Vishnu. It is also one of the best-preserved monuments of Khajuraho.

Interestingly, its present name is a misnomer as it has nothing to do with Lakshmana, the younger brother of Ramchandra.

The temple has countless brilliant sculptures of Hindu deities, 'apsaras', amorous couples engaged in lovemaking as well as animal and floral motifs.

2. Devi Shrine:

Standing right opposite Lakshmana Temple, it is austere as compared to its more intricately decorated neighbor. However, it has a delicately carved ceiling and offers a gorgeous view of the Lakshmana Temple. Inside, there sits an idol of Brahmani.

3. Varaha Mandapa:

Located just beside the Devi Shrine, this Mandapa houses India's most elaborately carved specimen of Varaha, the third incarnation of Vishnu. There are 674 miniature statues in 12 rows carved on the body of the Varaha. Actually, it represents Vishwarupa, the cosmic form of Vishnu embodying all means. The Varaha was once accompanied by a statue of Bhudevi. Sadly, only her feet have survived the test of time.

4. Kandariya Mahadeva Temple:

Regarded as the magnum opus of the Chandelas, it is undoubtedly the most famous among the Khajuraho temples. With its 'shikhara' soaring as high as 30.7 meters, it represents the pinnacle of the Nagara style of architecture.

The enormity of this temple along with an overflow of exceptional carvings will leave you speechless. It is estimated that as many as 872 statues decorate both the inside and outside of this lofty temple. The statues here are more refined and livelier, especially those of the apsaras engaged in various activities. Check out the three sculptures of Shiva, first as the slayer of Andhaka, second as Nataraja, and third as Tripurantaka – all placed inside the niches of the sanctum. Outside, admire the manifestations of Saptamatrikas led by a headless Ganesha and Virabhadra, Dikpalas like Indra and Kubera, and the Holy Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva under their various forms and incarnations.

5. Mahadeva Shrine:

Standing between Kandariya Mahadeva and Devi Jagadambi Temples, nothing significant is left of this shrine except the royal Chandela emblem showing a man fighting a lion.

6. Devi Jagadambi Temple:

This active temple was originally a Vishnu temple as evident from numerous Vaishnavite icons carved across its walls. At present, the

sanctum houses an idol of Parvati and hence the name of this temple. Interestingly, in Devi Jagadambi Temple, you will notice a profusion of amorous couples engaged in vigorous lovemaking. Even the figures of divine couples such as Shiva-Parvati, Vishnu-Lakshmi, and Brahma-Brahmani depict moods of love.

7. Chitragupta Temple:

The style of construction of Chitragupta Temple is similar to that of Devi Jagadambi. However, it is more ornate as compared to its neighbor.

It is the only Sun temple of Khajuraho. Inside the sanctum, an impressive statue of Surya, accompanied by Usha and Pratyusha, stands. Like Devi Jagadambi, you will see a plentitude of happy couples in erotic postures. Also, there are as many as 10 sculptures of Shiva and 14 of Dikpalas.

7. Vishwanatha Temple:

This temple is another riveting creation of the Chandelas. According to a detailed inscription inside the temple, Dhangadeva commissioned this temple while Sutradhara Chichchha was the chief architect. During its heyday, Vishwanatha Temple housed two Shiva lingams, one made of stone while the other of emerald.

Like Kandariya Mahadeva, you will be lost in the plentitude of captivating sculptures of Hindu Gods and Goddesses, 'Apsaras' and 'Devanganas' in graceful postures and couples in erotic poses. In total, there are 602 statues here.

9. Chausath Yogini Temple:

Oldest among all the Khajuraho monuments, it is located near the Shiv Sagar tank and outside the perimeter of the Western Group of Temples. Following the tradition of the 'yogini' cult, it is built in a hypaethral manner, which is open to the sky. The temple is comprised of 67 stone cellars. While one main cellar was devoted to Durga, the rest of the cellars were meant for yoginis and matrikas.

10. Duladeva Temple:

Dedicated to Lord Shiva, the original name of this temple is lost in the pages of history. The new name of 'Duladeva' literally translates into Bridegroom God. Owing to its refined styling and ornamentation, it is believed that this temple is an excellent specimen of the late Chandela temple architecture.

you will be amazed to find that the Duladeva Temple follows a star-shaped pattern a la the Hoysala temples of Belur and Halebidu. While observing the sculptures on the exterior, focus primarily on the outer walls of 'garbha-griha' which accommodate the best sculptures. You will find a superb carving of Shiva with three heads and ten hands as also a composite image of Hari, Hara, Brahma, and Surya with four heads and eight arms.

11. Chaturbhuja Temple:

Curiously, this Vishnu Temple faces west in stark contrast with other Hindu temples which face east or north. Inside the sanctum, a charming statue of Vishnu with four hands stands in a poised 'tribhanga' stance. Try visiting this temple during sunset, as the light of the setting sun illuminates the Vishnu inside the sanctum.

The ornamentation of Chaturbhuja Temple is much inferior as compared to other temples in Khajuraho. Also, erotic sculptures are absent here. Some of the intriguing sculptures here are those of Narasimhi (female Narasimha), Ardhanarishvara, Vishnu on 'lalatabimba', and Shiva-Parvati in 'lalitasana'.

12. Vamana Temple:

This temple, devoted to Vishnu's 5th incarnation of Vamana, confirms that Khajuraho was an important center for the worship of Vamana. The sanctum has a sandstone idol of Vamana, with all its hands broken. The deity is flanked by smaller images of Shiva and Brahma.

Outside, there are around 300 sculptures portraying mythical animal 'Vyala' and 'apsaras' in coquettish postures along with divine figures such as Varaha rescuing Bhudevi, Brahama, and Shiva-Parvati.

13. Javari Temple:

Like most of the Khajuraho Temples, the original name of this temple can hardly be fathomed now. This slender, Vaishnavite temple is one of the most beautiful temples of Khajuraho. The entrance has a richly carved 'makara torana', while the ceiling is elegantly carved with cusped flowers and 'Kirttimukhas'. The sanctum houses a four-armed Vishnu with a shattered head.

The temple exterior has exuberant carvings of 'apsaras', Dikpalas, amorous couples as also various incarnations of Vishnu.

14. Brahma Temple:

This crumbling temple is named after Brahma although it has a Shiva linga inside. There are four faces on the linga, facing the four cardinal directions. The icon resembled that of Brahma and hence named so.

15. Ghantai Temple:

This unusual structure is barely the skeletal remains of a once glorious Jain temple. Detached from the regular tourist trail of Khajuraho, only the meticulously carved pillars have survived the ordeal of time.

The pillars mostly have motifs of a bell ('Ghanta' in Hindi) and hence the ruined structure is called Ghantai. The most stunning piece of sculpture is the door jamb with a central image of Chakreshvari and various symbols of the Digambara Jain tradition.

16. Parshvanatha Temple:

Grandest of all the surviving Jain temples of Khajuraho, this temple was originally consecrated to Adinatha, the 1st Jain Tirthankara. This wonderful temple was built during the reign of Dhanga.

As you enter the temple, look up and be amazed by the most intricately carved ceiling among all the Khajuraho temples. A human figure is precariously perched on the ceiling, holding a garland, as if welcoming the visitors. Inside the sanctum, there is a modern seated idol of Parshvanatha placed over a ruined statue base that once held a statue of Adinatha.

The sculptures beautifying the outer walls of Parshvanatha Temple are classy with elegant proportions. Despite being a Jain monument, you will find a plethora of religious imagery from Hinduism. There are images of Vishnu-Lakshmi, Shiva-Parvati, and Brahma-Brahmani in affectionate postures, Valarama with his consort, Saraswati playing Veena, and so on. You will also notice voluptuous 'apsaras' applying Kajal, tying hair, or simply standing in a suggestive stance.

17. Adinatha Temple:

Located just beside the Parshvanatha Temple, the temple has lost most of its front section. The door jamb leading to the inner sanctum is strikingly carved with images of Chakreshvari, Ambika, and Padmavati. The 'apsaras' on the outer walls of Adinatha Temple are adorned with elaborate hairstyles, patterned costumes as well as heavy jewelry. You will also find images of Hindu deities, Dikpalas, and so on.

18. Shantinatha Temple:

The Chandela-era temple is now covered with modern renovations. This is an active temple, where the 16th Tirthankara Shantinatha is worshipped.

How to Reach Khajuraho:

Khajuraho has an airport and is well connected by road and rail to all major parts of India. It is conveniently accessible from other cities like Kanpur, Delhi and Jhansi. Here is how to reach Khajuraho:

1. By Air

Khajuraho Airport is the nearest airport. One can get taxi or a Jeep to reach the destination.

2. By Train

Khajuraho has a railway station, but only a few trains halt there. Mahoba is the nearest major railhead, 63 km away. Trains from Mumbai, Mathura, Allahabad, Varanasi, Gwalior, Jabalpur, Kolkata, etc. run regularly to Mahoba.

3. By Road

Roads of Khajuraho offer a smooth driving experience. The highways connect Khajuraho with every city in Madhya Pradesh. Both AC and Non AC buses are available in time intervals.